

## Penacova

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This is a wonderful location to live in and a very beautiful part of central Portugal. A house or apartment here would make a great family home or a holiday home which would always have good resale value and great letting potential.

The penacova region includes wonderful hills and mountains, deep valleys and flowing through this wonderful scenery is the river Mondego. Small white and red-tiled villages nestle on the slopes and the quaint stone and wood-built wind-mills at Portela de Oliveira and Gavinhos, for example face the more inclement breezes blowing from the heights. The antique lime-kilns at Casal de Santo Amaro never cease to interest visitors, and the landscape at the dams of Raiva and of Agueira charms the eyes.

Penacova in itself is perched on top of a great hill and is a very small and cheerful town, with a mild, dry climate and a characteristic luminosity which the sun shining on the slopes and the mirror-like waters of the Mondego bestow on it. Surrounded by green fields and set against the mountain, it is always lovely and specially so in February and March, when the golden mimosas in full bloom enhance its charm.

In the summer months there are a lot of events happening in and around the river Mondego. You can canoe from Penacova to Coimbra, there is a beach football competition and there is a local company providing a range of extreme sports like rock climbing and mountain biking. There are several wonderful cafes like the Panoramic cafe which is behind the tourist office in the main town square and which looks out over the whole river valley and onto the mountain ranges beyond. There is a lot to see and do in this area, or you can simply sit on the river beach and soak up the sun.

Penacova has plenty of history too. For example, the Monastery of S. Mamede of Coimbra and the Mondego River. In the bell tower of Lorvao, a plaque with visigothic ornaments proves the existence of a monastic life in this place, at least, since the 6th century. There are many stories from the times of the muslim invasion, but there is also a lack of documents. Even so, it's easy to believe that there was a climate of a certain peace between the monks and the mulabi military chiefs during the moorish times. In 878, after the Christian recovery of Coimbra, the Monastery of Lorvao played an important role in the re-peopling of a wide region: numerous charters passed in favour of the monastery remind us that role, but they also prove the decisive importance the Monastery had those days, even in politics.